

**MILWAUKEE CHILD WELFARE PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL
MINUTES DRAFT
Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services
Friday, November 12, 2021
12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

Due to the COVID-19 health crisis, the meeting was conducted by Zoom rather than in-person. The Zoom meeting information was made available on the Division of Children and Families (DCF) Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS) Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership Council webpage on Monday, November 8th, 2021 (<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/mcps/partnership-council>).

Members Present

At the request of Chairperson Christine Holmes, a roll call was taken to identify the Partnership Council members present for the meeting.

Present were: Libby Mueller, Carmen Pitre, Christine Holmes, Tony Shields, Santana Lee, Victor Barnett, Supervisor Willie Johnson Jr., Supervisor Patti Logsdon, Bria Grant, Dr. Mallory O'Brien, Senator LaTonya Johnson, Judge Laura Crivello, Supervisor Sequanna Taylor, Steve Gilbertson

A quorum of the Council was present on the Zoom meeting. Ms. Rachel Keith attended on behalf of Senator Alberta Darling.

Notice of Meeting

Chairperson Holmes reviewed compliance with Open Meetings Law requirements.

First, the notice of the meeting was published on the DCF and DOA websites on November 8, 2021 and in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel on November 8, 2021. Second, the notice was faxed to the newspaper of record for the State of Wisconsin, the Wisconsin State Journal, on November 8, 2021. The notice was emailed to the Partnership Council stakeholders including any media who had requested such notice on November 8, 2021. Finally, the agenda was posted on the front door of the DMCPS building at 635 N. 26th St. on November 9, 2021. This satisfies the requirements for notice under Wis. Stat. 19.84(1)(b).

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Review and Approval of Past Minutes, Christine Holmes, Chair

Chairperson Holmes sought approval of the Council's previous meeting minutes. A motion was made by Mr. Tony Shields to approve minutes from the September 24th, 2021 meeting. Supervisor Willie Johnson Jr. seconded the motion to approve. The motion passed unanimously.

Subcommittees Discussion and Updates

Health and Education Committee

Chairperson Holmes stated that the Health and Education Committee is not mandated by Statute and the introduction of holding the Committee meetings 20 years ago was a result of wanting to monitor the health and education status of children in the system. Chairperson Holmes indicated that there is a lack of attendance for this Committee now and there is a need of at least three Council members to attend meetings. Chairperson Holmes proposed that the Health and Education Committee be removed as a standing committee from the Council's Bylaws. She stated meetings can continue to take place with community members and DMCPs staff but there would be no need to have quorum to conduct meetings if the Health and Education Committee was no longer part of the Council.

Supervisor Willie Johnson Jr. asked how many members are on the Health and Education Committee now and when are the meetings? Chairperson Holmes answered there are three appointed, but they do not attend the meetings. There are typically three meetings scheduled for the year usually on Thursdays around noon.

Judge Crivello commented that she chairs the Out-of-Home Committee and three Council members do attend regularly. The meetings are informative and necessary discussion takes place but she does not know if it is needed to report back to the Council and is curious to know if the people who attend these meetings find it useful with the higher volume of meetings that take place through Zoom.

Bridget Chybowski, DMCPs Deputy Administrator, clarified that the Health and Education Committee has five appointed members and needs at minimum three members to attend to reach quorum. They have not been able to meet the three-

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member requirement regularly. The example was given that at the last scheduled meeting there were presentations scheduled with community organizations, however, quorum was not met and that technically, according to Open Meetings Laws, the meeting cannot be conducted if the required number of members for quorum are not present.

Chairperson Holmes stated it is in the Bylaws to have the Health and Education Committee but it is not in state statute and proposed to disband it as a standing committee and to amend the Bylaws to specially remove the Health and Education Committee as a Standing Committee of the Council. She stated there is still the ability to have Ad Hoc committees, but it is not necessary for the Health and Education Committee to remain a part of the Partnership Council.

Supervisor Sequanna Taylor suggested possibly changing the times of the Committee meetings to the evenings. She expressed that she thinks the meetings are vital. She encouraged finding ways to get the information presented and work done at the meetings out to the constituent base and community to improve meeting involvement.

Chairperson Holmes weighed in that she is stepping down as Chairperson of the Health and Education Committee because of her current role as chair on the Partnership Council and is open to a discussion on deciding a new Chairperson of the Committee.

Bridget Chybowski stated that the meetings can still happen and there is still an intent that DMCPs would continue the meetings, but the request is to remove the Committee from the Partnership Council purview and eliminate a lack of quorum preventing meetings from occurring.

Chairperson Holmes made a call to the Council to see if anyone wanted to volunteer to step up as Chair of the Health and Education Committee. Supervisor Taylor suggested Senator LaTonya Johnson to be the Chairperson.

Bridget Chybowski provided that the Partnership Council has the ability to form Ad Hoc committees at times when matters come up such as an initiative or legislation that would be related to the Council. A short-term committee could be created, or the Bylaws can be changed to bring the Committee back. She called

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for a conversation about the health and education component being part of the larger Partnership Council meeting versus branching it off to a subcommittee.

Chairperson Holmes made a motion to change the Bylaws to remove the Health and Education Committee as a Standing Committee from the Partnership Council Bylaws from Article 5/ Page 6 of Bylaws. Mr. Tony Shields seconded the motion.

Mr. Tony Shields asked if the lack of participation of Council members is getting in the way of the work of the Committee being accomplished. He expressed that he values the work and if the Council's involvement is hindering that, he suggests that they should rethink their position in the overall scope of the Committee.

Tony Shields asked if there is a staff recommendation related to DMCPs to help guide the Council in their decision. Bridget Chybowski stated that she believes DMCPs staff would be committed to moving the work forward that was expressed is needed and could provide future updates within the Council meetings. Council members can still be involved within meetings but there would no longer be a tie to the legalities of a subcommittee connected to the Council. Bridget Chybowski expressed if it continues under the Council, the committee's appointed Council members attendance and reaching quorum is required for meetings to proceed.

Supervisor Willie Johnson Jr. asked if there can be another call for a Council member to volunteer to become Chair for the Health and Education Committee. He believes the Committee is important and suggests a new time for the Committee meeting. Senator LaTonya Johnson volunteered to become Chair of the Health and Education Committee. Supervisor Sequanna Taylor volunteered to Co-Chair. Bridget Chybowski stated a conversation about subcommittee membership would need to take place to identify who all is a part of the Health and Education Committee going forward at a future meeting.

Chairperson Holmes called for the vote to disband the Committee. Two Council members voted in agreement to disband. Bria Grant expressed there may be more of a need to articulate how the Committee work could take place outside of the Council. Tony Shields suggested revisiting the topic at the next Council meeting and reviewing and revoting on the issue in the future. Vote did not pass, and Health and Education Committee still stands as a Council subcommittee.

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Bridget Chybowski assured DMCPs will help support the Chair and Co-Chair in the planning and follow-up with the Health and Education Committee. Bridget Chybowski stated the appointed Council members would have to attend the meetings to abide by Open Meeting rules.

Approval of 2022 Meeting Dates

Chairperson Holmes proposed and established new date for the 2022 meetings of the Partnership Council. All of the proposed meeting dates occur on Fridays and time remains the same, 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. The proposed dates are:

- February 11, 2022
- May 13, 2022
- August 12, 2022
- November 11, 2022

Chairperson Holmes asked for agenda items from Partnership Council Members. She mentioned that Judge Crivello would be stepping down as Chair of the Out-of-Home Committee and discussing the appointment of a new Chair will be an agenda item for February 2022 meeting.

Agenda ideas presented that were collected prior to Council meeting:

- The Wendy's Wonderful Kids Program
- How DMCPs will transition reporting from the Corrective Action Plan (CAP) reporting to the new version after being out of settlement
- The Partnership Council as a Citizen Review Panel and Statewide Reporting
- Housing
- Safe Care
- Sex trafficking
- A Child Welfare retrospective
- FFPSA Planning
- Sex trafficking prevention

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Supervisor Patti Logsdon expressed she would like to hear more concerns and aspects from foster parents. Chairperson Holmes recommended also hearing from young adults who graduated out of the system and others who were adopted from the system for lived experience testimony; Bridget Chybowski stated that the Youth Advisory Council, Wellpoint Care Network, and Children's Wisconsin can be contacted regarding this perspective. She noted that there will need to be some discussion of the legalities of these contacts but that it is an idea that can be explored.

Bria Grant suggested exploring the shifting focus of case management, as it relates to placement, during the initiation of the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) and with more placements happening within biological families.

Further agenda items are encouraged to be submitted and can be sent to Chairperson Holmes or Bridget Chybowski.

Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) Update

Presentation materials can be found at:

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/mcps/partnership-council>

The update was organized in a two-part presentation. The first part focused on updates related to FFPSA as of the last Partnership Council Meeting in the State-wide perspective and second part focused on the Milwaukee perspective. There were four presenters.

Wendy Henderson, Division Administrator, Division of Safety and Permanence

Wendy Henderson announced the necessary milestones were accomplished before the October 1, 2021 date when funding formulas changed for child welfare. Even though submitted Prevention Plan requests were not approved federally, there has been movement to receive public and private funding through partnerships and some Federal reimbursement could be retained for qualified candidates of foster care served by home-visiting programs. Some of the transformative work currently being done within FFPSA include: attentive exploration to support families with services related to housing and child care, evaluating agency motivational interviewing, and working on launching the Safety

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Planning Revision Workgroup targeting having a culturally responsible, equitable and just system.

Since October, DCF has received their first applications for Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (Q RTP). Actions to support Q RTP providers are progressing. Some examples are:

- Trainings for legal partners through Children's Court Improvement and technical trainings for child welfare professionals have been completed regarding Q RTP certification and Family First.
- 24/7 Nursing Hotline was established.
- A memo was released for recent Q RTP providers to submit a request for a rate that supports their additional clinical services.
- Feedback is continuing to be collected through Townhalls and communication with providers on the process of applying for certification.

New Child Welfare training is being transformed to use innovative ways to deliver learning options both remote and in-person to support workers and staff to better serve families in home. Also there has been improvements to create a more streamlined permanency plan process.

New prevention plan materials such as summaries and frequently asked questions are available at: <https://dcfwisconsin.gov/family-first/prevention>

Information and videos on Q RTP related content can be found at: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/family-first/q RTP>

Lilia Figueroa, Policy Initiatives Advisor, and Demetra Parr-Nelson, Initial Assessment Bureau Director, Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS)

Lilia Figueroa and Demetra Parr-Nelson presented information gathered in DMCPS Preventing Removals Workgroup. Lilia Figueroa stated that one of DMCPS starting points is to focus on children who have experienced six months or less in out-of-home care by utilizing data to identify connections between family conditions and services interventions, to understand family systems and their impact, and evaluate practice changes to keep children in the home. This

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information is in the works of being formatted to be shared on the Family First website in the future.

Demetra Parr-Nelson presented a draft of the preliminary reunification data collected reflecting the number of children between 2017 and August of 2021 using specific measurements. Demetra Parr-Nelson explained that this data will be used to identify the themes and patterns of the reunification time frames and to create an action plan that supports in-home services and provide resources.

Jill Collins, Ongoing Services Section Manager, DMCPs

Jill Collins presented the efforts of DMCPs Ongoing Services Section such as the addition of a Program and Policy Analyst position that focuses on FFPSA work and strategic goals, developing Milwaukee specific procedures including a guide for case managers and a request for proposal has been submitted for Stronger Families Milwaukee. The Ongoing Services Section is engaging with the transitions of QRTP providers by creating an After Care Model establishing expectations for QRTP with DMCPs, collaborating with the court system to adhere to state statutes with youth placements, and starting a partnership with Casey Family Programs to focus on reducing the need for congregate care placements.

Mark Ramion, Quality Operations Bureau Director, DMCPs

Mark Ramion credited the DMCPs Quality Improvement staff and fiscal auditors for creating a FFPSA Score Card to measure progress outcomes in FFPSA budget and spending and to research ways to increase funding for in-home services. The FFPSA Score Card presented DMCPs Out-of-Home Care and In-Home Services dated from January 2019 and June 2021 through five measures: number of children in entering out-of-home case, children in congregate care placements, number of children in family-like settings such as living with a relative , in-home services activity, and expenditures of out-of-home care and in-home services by period. Mark Ramion stated that DMCPs is looking for ways to work with partners and the Council to advocate for in-home service funding. This information will be presented on the website: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/family-first/background>

Comments and Questions Regarding Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) Updates

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Judge Crivello asked regarding the initial applications of QRTPs: When will the first certifications take place? Wendy Henderson answered that the first couple of certifications have already happened. She stated that the process of certification has been streamlined, meetings with providers have taken place to explain information and the process further and the turnaround has been fast so far.

Chairperson Holmes commended the planning and data tracking happening in the initial steps of FFPSA. She asked is the process of becoming a QRTP onerous for some of the residential centers? Wendy Henderson responded that because only licensed facilities are eligible to apply, their applications have been streamlined. They must provide their plan for trauma-informed treatment, aftercare ideas, and confirm that they have access to 24/7 nursing care. New applicants would have to go through the entire Residential Care and Group Home licensing process, complete the certification component and become accredited by a national accrediting body which can be onerous.

Chairperson Holmes recommended that DMCPs staff could benefit from other home-based dollars from programs available in Milwaukee that are not funded through Title IV such as the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) grants. She suggested that future training to DMCPs staff on referrals to community funding could be useful. Bridget Chybowski agreed and stated DMCPs Access Section has been through training with IMPACT 211 on connecting families to resources, housing, and services where child protective services involvement is not warranted. She confirmed a couple families have already been helped with this connection.

Community Input

There were no questions or comments made from the public.

Concluding Remarks, Christine Holmes, Chair

Chairperson Holmes responded in agreement to Mr. Steve Gilbertson's comment in the Zoom chat suggesting that a topic for next year can be a post-lawsuit refresher on what is the role and responsibilities of the Council members. She thanked the staff for the presentations, data collected, and the helpful discussions about the committees. She expressed appreciation on the input to keep children safe and looks forward to next year.

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Adjourn

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